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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR GETS POSITIVE RESPONSE ON TIP FROM DEPUTY PM  
STEPANIUC

Classified By: Ambassador Michael D. Kirby, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[¶1.](#) (C) Summary: Ambassador Kirby's April 16 meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Victor Stepaniuc resulted in promises of closer cooperation on anti-trafficking in persons (TIP) efforts and better Government reporting on crime and punishment statistics. End summary.

[¶2.](#) (C) Victor Stepaniuc, appointed as Deputy Prime Minister on January 16, was named head of the National Committee to Prevent Trafficking in Persons on March 13. His appointment brought to an end a nine-month period in which the Committee had no formal leadership. It also fulfilled the legal requirement that the Committee head be of Deputy Prime Minister rank. In his first meeting with Stepaniuc as Committee chairman, Ambassador Kirby described the differences between Tier 2, Tier 2 Watchlist, and Tier 3 TIP rankings. He also warned of the possibility of a Tier 3 rating and consequent complications of continuing non-humanitarian aid to Moldova.

[¶3.](#) (C) The Ambassador also requested clearer statistics on TIP-related crime and punishment, noting that the Government gives only aggregate statistics, without precise breakdowns of which TIP-related crimes receive exactly which punishments after conviction.

[¶4.](#) (C) Throughout the meeting, Stepaniuc consulted his own briefing papers on the subject (not a universal practice amongst Cabinet members here), took notes, and made numerous asides to his assistant to follow up the Ambassador's questions. Stepaniuc showed himself alert, involved in the issues, and eager to keep Moldova off Tier 3.

[¶5.](#) (C) Comment: Stepaniuc has begun to master his portfolio with apparent enthusiasm and eagerness. If this beginning translates into action, we will be pleased, given the usual lack of follow-through in Moldova. Perhaps the possibility of Tier 3 will bring focus the Government's efforts. End comment.

Kirby